



Department of Justice

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STATEMENT BY ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL JOEL KLEIN
ON BENDER V. WEST DECISION

WASHINGTON, D.C. –The United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit handed down an important decision yesterday in *Matthew Bender & Co. v. West Publishing Co.*, interpreting the copyright laws and their application to publication of judicial opinions.

The court held that publishers who compile court opinions on CD-ROM do not violate copyright laws when they utilize what is known as “star pagination,” referencing the page numbers in West Publishing Group’s caselaw reporters. West’s page numbers are the standard citation reference widely required by courts.

The Antitrust Division of the Department of Justice filed an amicus brief in this case supporting the position ultimately adopted by the court, which will lead to increased competition and lower prices in the legal publishing market. Joel I. Klein, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Antitrust Division, issued the following statement:

“Lowering the cost of access to the laws of the land, as interpreted by our courts, will improve access to the legal system by making it more affordable for all citizens.”

The case cite is: No. 97-7430.

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